


21 March 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. DULLES:

Attention is invited to a memorandum I wrote to the Director on 16 November 1960 (copy attached), wherein it is stated that TASS in a radio teletype in English to Europe at 1020 hours on 14 November 1960 quoted the NATION as stating that the U.S. CIA was training Cuban counterrevolutionaries, according to Dr. Ronald Hilton of Stanford University, at a site in Guatemala. The information obviously was advance promotional publicity by the NATION because it did not appear on the newsstands until 17 November 1960 under the dateline of 19 November 1960. A copy of the article in the NATION is attached.

  
STANLEY J. GROGAN

Assistant to the Director

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Enclosures

cc: DCI

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## Are We Training Cuban Guerrillas?

Fidel Castro may have a sounder basis for his expressed fears of a U.S.-financed "Guatemala-type" invasion than most of us realize. On a recent visit to Guatemala, Dr. Ronald Hilton, Director of the Institute of Hispanic-American Studies at Stanford University, was told:

1. The United States Central Intelligence Agency has acquired a large tract of land, at an outlay in excess of \$1,000,000, which is stoutly fenced and heavily guarded. Dr. Hilton was informed that it is "common knowledge" in Guatemala that the tract is being used as a training ground for Cuban counter-revolutionaries who are preparing for an eventual landing in Cuba. It was also said that U.S. personnel and equipment are being used at the base. The camp is said to be located in Retalhuleu, between Guatemala City and the coast.

2. Substantially all of the above was reported by a well-known Guatemalan journalist, Clemente Marroquin Rojas, in *La Hora*, a Guatemalan newspaper of which he is the director. His article appeared in violation, it is said, of a Government prohibition against any public discussion of the matter.

3. More recently, the President of Guatemala, forced to take cognizance of the persistent reports concerning the base, went on TV and admitted its existence, but refused to discuss its purpose or any other facts about it.

The American press — even media with accredited correspondents on the scene — has apparently remained unaware of the public commotion the subject has aroused in Guatemala. Not even President Ydigoras' TV statement that a secret base exists has been reported in the United States, so far as we know. We ourselves, of course, pretend to no first-hand knowledge of the facts; nevertheless, we feel an obligation to bring the subject to public attention. If Washington is ignorant of the existence of the base, or, knowing that it exists, is nevertheless innocent of any involvement in it, then surely the appropriate authorities will want to scotch all invidious rumors and issue a full statement of the real facts. On the other hand, if the reports as heard by Dr. Hilton are true, then public pressure should be brought to bear upon the Administration to abandon this dangerous and hair-brained project.

There is a second reason why we believe the reports merit publication: they can, and should, be checked immediately by all U.S. news media with correspondents in Guatemala.

Meanwhile, Dr. Hilton informs us that he will publish additional details of his findings in Guatemala in the November issue of the *Hispanic-American Review*, published by the Institute of which he is the director. The sooner the truth emerges, the better for all concerned — the United States, which now stands accused; the Cubans, who assert fear of an imminent invasion; and the Guatemalans, who appear to be thrust into a perilous quarrel not of their making.